

ALMORAN

AND

HAMET:

AN

ORIENTAL TALE.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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BY

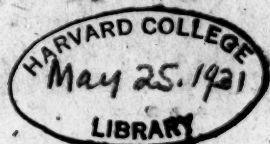
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# ALMORAN AND HAMET.

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## VOLUME THE FIRST.

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### C H A P. I.

**W**HO is he among the children of the earth, that repines at the power of the wicked? and who is he, that would change the lot of the righteous? He, who has appointed to each his portion, is God; the Omniscient and the Almighty, who fills eternity, and whose existence is from himself! but he who murmurs, is man; who yesterday was not, and who to-morrow shall be forgotten: let him listen in silence to the voice of knowledge, and hide the blushes of confusion in the dust.

Solyman, the mighty and the wise, who, in the one hundred and second year of the Hegira, sat upon the throne of Persia, had two sons, Almorán and Hamet, and they were twins. Almorán was the first-born, but Solyman divided his affection equally between them: they were both lodged in the same part of the seraglio, both were attended by the same servants, and both received instructions from the same teacher.

One of the first things that Almorán learnt, was the prerogative of his birth; and he was taught very early to set a high value upon it, by the terms in which those about him expressed their sense of the power, the splendour, and the delights of royalty. As his mind gradually opened, he naturally considered these as the objects of universal desire, and the means of supreme felicity: he was often reminded, that the time was coming, when the sole possession of sove-

reign power would enable him to fulfil all his wishes, to determine the fate of dependent nations with a nod, and dispense life and death, and happiness and misery, at his will: he was flattered by those who hoped to draw wealth and dignity from his favour; and interest prompted all who approached him, to administer to his pleasures with a zeal and assiduity, which had the appearance of reverence to his merit, and affection to his person.

Hamet, on the contrary, soon became sensible of a subordinate station: he was not, indeed, neglected; but he was not much caressed. When the gratification of Hamet came in competition with that of Almorán, he was always obliged to give it up, except when Solyman interposed: his mind was, therefore, naturally led to seek for happiness in objects very different from those which had fixed the attention of Almorán. As he knew not to how narrow a sphere caprice or jealousy might confine him, he considered what pleasures were least dependant upon external advantages; and as the first popular commotion which should happen after his brother's accession to the throne, might probably cost him his life, he was very inquisitive about the state into which his spirit would be dismissed by the Angel of Death, and very diligent to do whatever might secure him a share of the permanent and unchangeable felicity of paradise.

This difference in the situation of Almorán and Hamet, produced great dissimilarity in their dispositions, habits, and characters; to which, perhaps, nature might also in some degree contribute. Almorán was haughty, vain, and voluptuous; Hamet was gentle, courteous, and temperate: Almorán was volatile, impetuous, and irascible; Hamet was thoughtful, patient, and forbearing. Upon the heart of Hamet, also, were written the instructions of the prophet; to his mind futurity was present by habitual anticipation; his pleasure, his pain, his hopes, and his fears, were perpetually referred to the Invisible and Almighty Father of Life, by sentiments of gratitude or resignation, complacency or confidence; so that his devotion was not periodical but constant.

But the views of Almorán were terminated by nearer objects: his mind was perpetually busied in the anticipation of pleasures and honours, which he supposed to be neither un-

certain



certain nor remote; these excited his hopes, with a power sufficient to fix his attention; he did not look beyond them for other objects, nor enquire how enjoyments more distant were to be acquired; and as he supposed these to be already secured to him by his birth, there was nothing he was solicitous to obtain as the reward of merit, nor any thing that he considered himself to possess as the bounty of Heaven. If the sublime and disinterested rectitude that produces and rewards itself, dwells indeed with man, it dwelt not with Almorán; with respect to God, therefore, he was not impressed with a sense either of duty or dependance; he felt neither reverence nor love, gratitude nor resignation; in abstaining from evil, he was not intentionally good; he practised the externals of morality without virtue, and performed the rituals of devotion without piety.

Such were Almorán and Hamet, when Solymán their father, full of days and full of honour, slept in peace the sleep of death. With this event they were immediately acquainted. The emotions of Almorán were such as it was impossible to conceal; the joy that he felt in secret was so great, that the mere dread of disappointment for a moment suspended his belief of what he heard; when his fears and his doubts gave way, his cheeks were diffused with sudden blushes, and his eyes sparkled with exultation and impatience; he looked eagerly about him, as if in haste to act, yet his looks were embarrassed, and his gestures irresolute, because he knew not what to do: he uttered some incoherent sentences, which discovered at once the joy that he felt, and his sense of its impropriety; and his whole deportment expressed the utmost tumult and perturbation of mind.

Upon Hamet, the death of his father produced a very different effect: as soon as he heard it, his lips trembled, and his countenance grew pale; he stood motionless a moment, like a pilgrim transfixed by lightning in the desert; he then smote his breast, and looking upward, his eyes by degrees overflowed with tears, and they fell, like dew distilling from the mountain, in a calm and silent shower. As his grief was thus mingled with devotion, his mind in a short time recovered its tranquillity, though not its cheerfulness, and he desired to be conducted to his brother.

He found him furrounded by the lords of his court, his eye still restless and ardent, and his deportment elate and assuming. Hamet pressed hastily through the circle, and prostrated himself before him: Almorán received the homage with a tumultuous pleasure; but at length raised him from the ground, and assured him of his protection, though without any expressions either of kindness or of sorrow. 'Hamet,' says he, 'if I have no cause to complain of you as a subject, you shall have no cause to complain of me as a king.' Hamet, whose heart was again pierced by the cold and distant behaviour of his brother, suppressed the sigh that struggled in his bosom, and secretly wiped away the tear that started in his eye: he retired, with his looks fixed upon the ground, to a remote corner of the apartment; and though his heart yearned to embrace his brother, his modest diffidence restrained him from intruding upon the king.

In this situation were Almorán and Hamet, when Omar entered the apartment. Omar, upon whose head the hand of time became heavy, had from his youth acquainted himself with wisdom; to him Nature had revealed herself in the silence of the night, when his lamp was burning alone, and his eyes only were open; to him was known the power of the Seal of Solyman; and to him the knowledge of things invisible had been revealed. Nor was the virtue of Omar inferior to his knowledge; his heart was a fountain of good, which, though it flowed through innumerable streams, was never dry: yet was the virtue of Omar cloathed with humility; and he was still pressing nearer to perfection, by a devotion which, though elevated, was rational, and though regular was warm. From the counsel of Omar, Solyman had derived glory and strength; and to him he had committed the education of his children.

When he entered the apartment, the crowd, touched at once with reverence and love, drew back; every eye was cast downward, and every tongue was silent. The full of days approached the king, and kneeling before him, he put into his hand a sealed paper: the king received it with impatience, seeing it superscribed with the hand of his father; and Omar looking round, and perceiving Hamet, beckoned him to come forward. Hamet, whose obedience to Omar had

had been so long habitual that it was now almost spontaneous, instantly drew near, though with slow and irresolute pace; and Almorán, having broken the seal of the paper, began to read it to himself, with a look that expressed the utmost anxiety and impatience. Omar kept his eye fixed upon him, and soon perceived that his countenance was disfigured by confusion and trouble, and that he seemed preparing to put up the paper into his bosom: he then produced another paper from under his robe, and gave it to Hamet: 'This,' says he, 'is a copy of the will of Solymán, your father; the original is in the hand of Almorán: read it, and you will find that he has bequeathed his kingdom between you.'

The eyes of all present were now turned upon Hamet, who stood silent and motionless with amazement, but was soon roused to attention by the homage that was paid him. In the mean time, Almorán's confusion increased every moment: his disappointment was aggravated by the sudden attention of those who were present to his brother; and his jealousy made him think himself neglected, while those acts of duty were performed to Hamet, which were now known to be his right, and which he had himself received before him.

Hamet, however, regarded but little what so much excited the envy of Almorán; his mind was employed upon superior objects, and agitated by nobler passions: the coldness of his brother's behaviour, though it had grieved, had not quenched his affection; and as he was now no longer restrained by the deference due from a subject to his king, he ran to him, and catching him to his breast, attempted to speak; but his heart was too full, and he could express his affection and joy only by his tears. Almorán rather suffered than received the embrace; and after a few ceremonies, to which neither of them could much attend, they retired to separate apartments.

## C H A P. II.

**W**HEN Almorán was alone, he immediately locked the door; and throwing himself upon a sofa in an agony of vexation and disappointment, of which he was unwilling there should be any witness, he revolved in his mind all the pleasures and honours of supreme dominion, which had now suddenly been snatched from him, with a degree of anguish and regret, not proportioned to their real, but their imaginary value.

Of future good, that which we obtain is found to be less than our expectations; but that of which we are disappointed, we suppose would have been more: thus do the children of hope extract evil, both from what they gain, and from what they lose.

But Almorán, after the first tumult of his mind had subsided, began to consider as well what was left him, as what had been taken away. He was still without a superior, though he had an equal; he was still a king, though he did not govern alone: and with respect to every individual in his dominions, except one, his will would now be a law; though with respect to the publick, the concurrence of his brother would be necessary to give it force. ‘Let me then,’ says he, ‘make the most of the power that is now put into my hand, and wait till some favourable opportunity shall offer to increase it. Let me dissemble my jealousy and disappointment, that I may not alarm suspicion, or put the virtues of Hamet upon their guard against me; and let me contrive to give our joint administration such a form as may best favour my design.’

Such were the reflections with which Almorán soothed the anguish of his mind; while Hamet was busied in speculations of a very different kind. If he was pleased at reflecting, that he was raised from a subject to a prince, he was pleased still more, when he considered his elevation as a test of his father’s affection to his person, and approbation of his conduct; he was also delighted with the thought, that his brother was associated with him in the arduous task which he was now called to perform. ‘If I had been appointed

‘pointed to govern alone,’ said he, ‘I should have had no equal; and he who has no equal, though he may have faithful servants, can have no friend: there cannot be that union of interests, that equal participation of good, that unrestrained intercourse of mind, and that mutual dependance, which constitutes the pure and exalted happiness of friendship. With Almorán I shall share the supreme delight of wresting the innocent and the helpless from the iron hand of oppression; of animating merit by reward, and restraining the unworthy by fear: I shall share, with Almorán, the pleasures of governing a numerous, a powerful, and a happy people; pleasures which, however great, are, like all others, increased by participation.’

While Hamet was thus enjoying the happiness, which his virtue derived from the same source from which the vices of Almorán had filled his breast with anguish and discontent; Omar was contriving in what manner their joint government could best be carried into execution.

He knew that Solyman, having considered the dispositions of his sons, was of opinion, that if they had been blended in one person, they would have produced a character more fit to govern in his stead, than either of them alone; Almorán, he thought, was too volatile and warm; but he suspected, that Hamet would sink into inactivity for want of spirit: he feared alike Almorán’s love of enterprize, and Hamet’s fondness for retirement. He observed, in Hamet, a placid easiness of temper, which might suffer the reins of government to lie too loose; and in Almorán a quickness of resentment, and jealousy of command, which might hold them too tight: he hoped, therefore, that by leaving them a joint dominion, he should blend their dispositions, at least in their effects, in every act of government that should take place; or that, however they should agree to administer their government, the publick would derive benefit from the virtues of both, without danger of suffering from their imperfections; as their imperfections would only operate against each other, while in whatever was right, their minds would naturally concur, as the coincidence of rectitude with rectitude, is necessary and eternal. But he



did not consider, that different dispositions operating separately upon two different wills, would appear in effects very unlike those which they would concur to produce in one; that two wills, under the direction of dispositions so different, would seldom be brought to coincide; and that more mischiefs would probably arise from the contest, than from the imperfections of either alone.

But Solyman had so long applauded himself for his project before he revealed it to Omar, that Omar found him too much displeased with any objection, to consider its weight: and knowing that peculiar notions are more rarely given up, than opinions received from others, and made our own only by adoption, he at length acquiesced, lest he should by farther opposition lose his influence which on other occasions he might still employ to the advantage of the publick; and took a solemn oath, that he would, as far as was in his power, see the will carried into execution.

To this, indeed, he consented without much reluctance, as he had little less reason to fear the sole government of Almorán, than a joint administration: and if a struggle for superiority should happen, he hoped the virtues of Hamet would obtain the suffrages of the people in his favour, and establish him upon the throne alone. But as change is itself an evil, and as changes in government are seldom produced without great confusion and calamity, he applied himself to consider in what manner the government of Almorán and Hamet could be administered, so as most effectually to blend their characters in their administration, and prevent the conduct of one from exciting jealousy in the other.

After much thought, he determined that a system of laws should be prepared, which the sons of Solyman should examine and alter till they perfectly approved, and to which they should then give the sanction of their joint authority: that when any addition or alteration should be thought necessary, it should be made in the same manner; and that when any insuperable difference of sentiment happened, either in this or in any act or prerogative independent of the laws for regulating the manners of the people, the kings should refer it to some person of improved integrity and wisdom, and abide by his determination. Omar easily foresaw, that when the opinion of Almorán and Hamet should differ, the

the opinion of Almorán would be established; for there were many causes that would render Almorán inflexible, and Hamet yielding: Almorán was naturally confident and assuming, Hamet diffident and modest; Almorán was impatient of contradiction; Hamet was attentive to argument, and solicitous only for the discovery of truth. Almorán also conceived, that by the will of his father, he had suffered wrong; Hamet, that he had received a favour. Almorán, therefore, was disposed to resent the first appearance of opposition; and Hamet, on the contrary, to acquiesce, as in his share of government, whatever it might be, he had more than was his right by birth, and his brother had less. Thus, therefore, the will of Almorán would probably predominate in the state; but as the same cause which conferred this superiority, would often prevent contention, Omar considered it, upon the whole, rather as good than evil.

When he had prepared his plan, therefore, he sent a copy of it, by different messengers at the same time, both to Almorán and Hamet, inclosed in a letter, in which he expressed his sense of obligation to their father, and his zeal and affection for them: he mentioned the promise he had made, to devote himself to their service; and the oath he had taken, to propose whatever he thought might facilitate the accomplishment of their father's design, with honour to them, and happiness to their people. These motives, which he could not resist without impiety, he hoped would absolve him from presumption; and trusting in the rectitude of his intentions, he left the issue to God.

### CHAP. III.

THE receipt of this letter threw Almorán into another agony of indignation: he felt again the loss of his prerogative; the offer of advice he disdained as an insult, to which he had been injuriously subjected by the will of his father; and he was disposed to reject whatever was suggested by Omar, even before his proposal was known. With this temper of mind he began to read, and at every

paragraph took new offence; he determined, however, not to admit Omar to the honour of a conference upon the subject, but to settle a plan of government with his brother, without the least regard to his advice.

A supercilious attention to minute formalities, is a certain indication of a little mind, conscious to the want of innate dignity, and solicitous to derive from others what it cannot supply to itself: as the scrupulous exaction of every trifling tribute discovers the weakness of the tyrant who fears his claim should be disputed; while the prince, who is conscious of superior and indisputable power, and knows that the states he has subjugated do not dare to revolt, scarce enquires whether such testimonies of allegiance are given or not.

Thus the jealousy of Almorán already enslaved him to the punctilios of state; and the most trifling circumstances involved him in perplexity, or fired him with resentment. The friendship and fidelity of Omar stung him with rage, as insolent and intrusive; and though it determined him to an immediate interview with his brother, yet he was embarrassed how to procure it. At first he rose, and was about to go to him; but he stopped short with disdain, upon reflecting, that it was an act of condescension which might be deemed an acknowledgment of superiority. He then thought of sending for Hamet to come to him; but this he feared might provoke him, as implying a denial of his equality. At length he determined to propose a meeting in the chamber of council, and was just dispatching an officer with the message when Hamet entered the apartment.

The countenance of Hamet was flushed with joy, and his heart was warmed with the pleasing sensations of affection and confidence, by the same letter, from which Almorán had extracted the bitterness of jealousy and resentment; and as he had no idea that an act of courtesy to his brother could derogate from his own dignity or importance, he indulged the honest impatience of his heart to communicate the pleasure with which it overflowed. He was, indeed, somewhat disappointed, to find no traces of satisfaction in the countenance of Almorán, when he saw the same paper in his hand, which had impressed so much upon his own.

He

He waited some time after the first salutation without mentioning the scheme of government he was come to concert; because, having observed that Almorán was embarrassed and displeased, he expected that he would communicate the cause, and pleased himself with the hope that he might remove it: finding, however, that this expectation was disappointed, he addressed him to this effect—

‘How happy are we, my dear brother, in the wisdom and fidelity of Omar! How excellent is the system of government that he has proposed! How easy and honourable will it be to us that govern, and how advantageous to the people that obey!’

‘The advantages,’ said Almorán, ‘which you seem to have discovered, are not evident to me: tell me, then, what you imagine they are, and I will afterwards give you my opinion?’

‘By establishing a system of laws as the rules of government,’ said Hamet, ‘many evils will be avoided, and many benefits procured. If the law is the will only of the sovereign, it can never certainly be known to the people: many, therefore, may violate that rule of right, which the hand of the Almighty has written upon the living tablets of the heart, in the presumptuous hope, that it will not subject them to punishment; and those by whom that rule is fulfilled will not enjoy the consciousness of security, which they would derive from the protection of a prescribed law, which they have never broken. If neither the offence is ascertained, nor the punishment prescribed, one motive to probity will be wanting; which ought to be supplied, as well for the sake of those who may be tempted to offend, as of those who may suffer by the offence. Besides, he who governs not by a written and a public law, must either administer that government in person, or by others: if in person, he will sink under a labour which no man is able to sustain; and if by others, the inferiority of their rank must subject them to temptations which it cannot be hoped they will always resist, and to prejudices which it will perhaps be impossible for them to surmount. But to administer government by a law which ascertains the offence, and directs the punishment, integrity alone will be sufficient; and as the sentence will, in this case, depend not upon opinion but upon facts, justice will seldom be perverted



\* perverted, even when integrity is wanting; because, as it  
 \* cannot be imputed to error, it will always incur the in-  
 \* famy and danger of notorious guilt.'

Almorán, who had heard the opinions of Hamet with impatience and scorn, now started from his seat with a proud and contemptuous aspect. He first glanced his eyes upon his brother; and then looking disdainfully downward, he threw back his robe, and stretching out his hand from him—'Shall the son of Solyman,' said he, 'upon whose  
 \* will the fate of nations was suspended, whose smiles and  
 \* frowns were alone the criterions of right and wrong, be-  
 \* fore whom the voice of Wisdom itself was silent, and the  
 \* pride even of Virtue humbled in the dust; shall the son of  
 \* Solyman be harnessed, like a mule, in the trammels of  
 \* law? shall he become a mere instrument to execute what  
 \* others have devised? shall he only declare the determi-  
 \* nations of a statute; and shall his ear be affronted by claims  
 \* of right? It is the glory of a prince, to punish for what  
 \* and whom he will; to be the sovereign, not only of prop-  
 \* erty, but of life; and to govern alike without prescrip-  
 \* tion or appeal.'

Hamet, who was struck with astonishment at this declaration, and the vehemence with which it was uttered, after a short recollection made this reply—'It is the glory of a  
 \* prince to govern others, as he is governed by Him who  
 \* is alone most merciful and almighty! It is his glory to  
 \* prevent crimes, rather than to display his power in punish-  
 \* ment; to diffuse happiness, rather than enforce subjection;  
 \* and rather to animate with love, than depress by fear.  
 \* Has not He that shall judge us, given us a rule of life by  
 \* which we shall be judged? Is not our reward and punish-  
 \* ment already set before us? are not his promises and  
 \* threatenings motives to obedience? and have we not con-  
 \* fidence and joy, when we have obeyed? To God, his  
 \* own divine perfections are a law; and these He has tran-  
 \* scribed as a law to us. Let us, then, govern, as we are  
 \* governed; let us seek our happiness in the happiness that  
 \* we bestow, and our honour in emulating the benevolence  
 \* of Heaven.'

As Almorán feared, that to proceed in this argument would too far disclose his sentiments, and put Hamet too  
 much.



much upon his guard ; he determined for the present to dissemble ; and as he perceived, that Hamet's opinion, and an administration founded upon it, would render him extremely popular, and at length possibly establish him alone ; he was now solicitous only to withdraw him from publick notice, and persuade him to leave the government, whatever form it should receive, to be administered by others : returning, therefore, to his seat, and assuming an appearance of complacency and tranquillity, with which he could not form his language perfectly to agree—' Let us then,' said he, ' if a law must be set up in our stead, leave the law to be executed by our slaves : and as nothing will be left for us to do, that is worthy of us, let us devote ourselves to the pleasures of ease ; and if there are any enjoyments peculiar to royalty, let us secure them as our only distinction from the multitude.'

' Not so,' says Hamet ; ' for there is yet much for a prince to do, after the best system of laws has been established : the government of a nation as a whole, the regulation and extent of its trade, the establishment of manufactures, the encouragement of genius, the application of the revenues, and whatever can improve the arts of peace, and secure superiority in war, is the proper object of a king's attention.'

' But in these,' said Almorán, ' it will be difficult for two minds to concur ; let us, then, agree to leave these also to the care of some other, whom we can continue as long as we approve, and displace when we approve no longer : we shall, by this expedient, be able to avert the odium of any unpopular measure ; and by the sacrifice of a slave, we can always satisfy the people, and silence publick discontent.'

' To trust implicitly to another,' says Hamet, ' is to give up a prerogative, which it is at once our highest duty and interest to keep ; it is to betray our trust, and to sacrifice our honour to another. The prince, who leaves the government of his people implicitly to a subject, leaves it to one who has many more temptations to betray their interest than himself. A vicegerent is in a subordinate station ; he has, therefore, much to fear, and much to hope : he may also acquire the power of obtaining what he hopes,

' and

‘and averting what he fears, at the publick expence; he may stand in need of dependants, and may be able no otherwise to procure them, than by conniving at the fraud or the violence which they commit; he may receive in bribes an equivalent for his share, as an individual, in the publick prosperity; for his interest is not essentially connected with that of the state; he has a separate interest, but the interest of the state, and of the king, are one; he may even be corrupted to betray the councils, and give up the interest of the nation to a foreign power; but this is impossible to the king; for nothing equivalent to what he would give up, could be offered him. But as a king has not equal temptations to do wrong, neither is he equally exposed to opposition, when he does right: the measures of a substitute are frequently opposed, merely from interest; because the leader of a faction against him hopes, that if he can remove him by popular clamour, he shall succeed to his power; but it can be no man’s interest to oppose the measures of a king, if his measures are good, because no man can hope to supplant him. Are not these the precepts of the Prophet, whose wisdom was from above:—“Let not the eve of expectation be raised to another for that which thyself only should bestow: suffer not thy own shadow to obscure thee; nor be content to derive that glory, which it is thy prerogative to impart.”

‘But is the prince,’ said Almorán, ‘always the wisest man in his dominions? Can we not find, in another, abilities and experience, which we do not possess? and is it not the duty of him who presides in the ship, to place the helm in that hand which can best steer it?’

‘A prince,’ said Hamet, ‘who sincerely intends the good of his people, can scarce fail to effect it; all the wisdom of the nation will be at once turned to that object: whatever is his principal aim, will be that of all who are admitted to his council; for to concur with his principal aim, must be the surest recommendation to his favour. Let us, then, hear others; but let us act ourselves.’

As Almorán now perceived, that the longer this conversation continued, the more he would be embarrassed; he put an end to it, by appearing to acquiesce in what Hamet had

had proposed. Hamet withdrew, charmed with the candour and flexibility which he imagined he had discovered in his brother; and not without some exultation in his own rhetoric, which he supposed had gained no inconsiderable victory. Almorán, in the mean time, applauded himself for having thus far practised the arts of dissimulation with success; fortified himself in the resolutions he had before taken; and conceived new malevolence and jealousy against Hamet.

#### CHAP. IV.

**W**HILE Hamet was exulting in his conquest, and his heart was overflowing at once with self-complacency, and affection to his brother, he was told that Omar was waiting without, and desired admittance. Hamet ordered that he should be immediately introduced; and when Omar entered, and would have prostrated himself before him, he caught him in his arms in a transport of affection and esteem; and having ordered that none should interrupt them, compelled him to sit down on a sofa.

He then related, with all the joy of a youthful and an ardent mind, the conversation he had had with Almorán, intermixed with expressions of the highest praise and the most cordial esteem. Omar was not without suspicion, that the sentiments which Almorán had first expressed with such vehemence of passion, were still predominant in his mind: but of these suspicions he did not give the least hint to Hamet, not only because to communicate suspicions is to accuse without proof, but because he did not think himself at liberty to make an ill report of another, though he knew it to be true. He approved the sentiments of Hamet, as they had indeed been infused by his own instructions; and some precepts and cautions were now added, which the accession of Hamet to a share of the imperial power made particularly necessary.

‘Remember,’ said Omar, ‘that the most effectual way of promoting virtue is to prevent occasions of vice. There are, perhaps, particular situations, in which human virtue  
‘ has

' has always failed : at least, temptation often repeated, and  
 ' long continued, has seldom been finally resisted. In a go-  
 ' vernment so constituted as to leave the people exposed to  
 ' perpetual seduction, by opportunities of dissolute pleasure  
 ' or iniquitous gain, the multiplication of penal laws will  
 ' only tend to depopulate the kingdom, and disgrace the  
 ' state ; to devote to the scymitar and the bow-string those  
 ' who might have been useful to society, and to leave the  
 ' rest dissolute, turbulent, and factious. If the streets not  
 ' only abound with women, who inflame the passenger by  
 ' their appearance, their gesture, and their solicitations ;  
 ' but with houses in which every desire which they kindle  
 ' may be gratified with secrecy and convenience ; it is in  
 ' vain that " the feet of the prostitute go down to death,  
 " and that her steps take hold on hell : " what then can be  
 ' hoped from any punishment, which the laws of man  
 ' can superadd to disease and want, to rottenness and per-  
 ' dition ? If you permit opium to be publicly sold at a low  
 ' rate, it will be folly to hope, that the dread of punishment  
 ' will render idleness and drunkenness strangers to the poor.  
 ' If a tax is so collected, as to leave opportunities to pro-  
 ' cure the commodity without paying it ; the hope of gain  
 ' will always surmount the fear of punishment. If, when  
 ' the veteran has served you at the risque of his life, you  
 ' withhold his hire ; it will be in vain to threaten usury and  
 ' extortion with imprisonment and fines. If, in your  
 ' armies, you suffer it to be any man's interest, rather to  
 ' preserve the life of a horse than a man ; be assured, that  
 ' your own sword is drawn for your enemy : for there  
 ' will always be some, in whom interest is stronger than hu-  
 ' manity and honour. Put no man's interest, therefore, in  
 ' balance against his duty ; nor hope that good can often  
 ' be produced, but by preventing opportunities of evil.'

To these precepts of Omar, Hamet listened as to the in-  
 structions of a father ; and having promised to keep them as  
 the treasure of life, he dismissed him from his presence.  
 The heart of Hamet was now expanded with the most pleas-  
 ing expectations ; but Almorán was pining with solici-  
 tude, jealousy, and distrust : he took every opportunity to  
 avoid both Omar and Hamet ; but Hamet still retained his  
 confidence, and Omar his suspicions.



## C H A P. V.

**I**N the mean time, the system of government was established which had been proposed by Omar, and in which Hamet concurred from principle, and Almorán from policy. The views of Almorán terminated in the gratification of his own appetites and passions; those of Hamet, in the discharge of his duty: Hamet, therefore, was indefatigable in the business of the state; and as his sense of honour, and his love of the publick, made this the employment of his choice, it was to him the perpetual source of a generous and sublime felicity. Almorán also was equally diligent, but from another motive: he was actuated, not by love of the publick, but by jealousy of his brother; he performed his task as the drudge of necessity, with reluctance and ill-will; so that to him it produced pain and anxiety, weariness and impatience.

To atone for this waste of time, he determined to crowd all that remained with delight: his gardens were an epitome of all nature, and on his palace were exhausted all the treasures of art; his seraglio was filled with beauties of every nation, and his table supplied with dainties from the remotest corners of his dominions. In the songs that were repeated in his presence, he listened at once to the voice of adulation and musick; he breathed the perfumes of Arabia, and he tasted the forbidden pleasure of wine. But as every appetite is soon satiated by excess, his eagerness to accumulate pleasure deprived him of enjoyment. Among the variety of beauties that surrounded him, the passion, which, to be luxurious, must be delicate and refined, was degraded to a mere instinct, and exhausted in endless dissipation; the caress was not endeared by a consciousness of a reciprocal delight, and was immediately succeeded by indifference or disgust. By the dainties that perpetually urged him to intemperance, that appetite, which alone could make even dainties tasteful, was destroyed. The splendor of his palace, and the beauty of his gardens, became at length so familiar to his eye, that they were frequently before him, without being seen. Even flattery and musick lost their power, by



too frequent a repetition: and the broken slumbers of the night, and the languor of the morning, were more than equivalent to the transient hilarity that was inspired by wine. Thus passed the time of Almorán, divided between painful labours which he did not dare to shun, and the search of pleasure which he could never find.

Hamet, on the contrary, did not seek pleasure, but pleasure seemed to seek him: he had a perpetual complacency and serenity of mind, which rendered him constantly susceptible of pleasing impressions; every thing that was prepared to refresh or entertain him, in his seasons of retirement and relaxation, added something to the delight which was continually springing in his breast when he reviewed the past, or looked forward to the future. Thus the pleasures of sense were heightened by those of the mind, and the pleasures of the mind by those of sense; he had, indeed, as yet no wife; for as yet no woman had fixed his attention, or determined his choice.

Among the ambassadors whom the monarchs of Asia sent to congratulate the sons of Solymán upon their accession to the throne, there was a native of Circassia, whose name was Abdallah. Abdallah had only one child, a daughter, in whom all his happiness and affection centered; he was unwilling to leave her behind, and therefore brought her to the court of Persia. Her mother died while she was yet an infant; she was now in the sixteenth year of her age, and her name was Almeida. She was beautiful as the daughters of Paradise, and as gentle as the breezes of the spring; her mind was without stain, and her manners were without art.

She was lodged with her father in a palace that joined to the gardens of the seraglio; and it happened that a lamp which had one night been left burning in a lower apartment, by some accident set fire to the net-work of cotton that surrounded a sofa, and the whole room was soon after in a flame. Almorán, who had been passing the afternoon in riot and debauchery, had been removed from his banqueting-room asleep; but Hamet was still in his closet, where he had been regulating some papers that were to be used the next day. The windows of this room opened towards the inner apartments of the house in which Abdallah resided; and

and Hamet, having by accident looked that way, was alarmed by the appearance of an unusual light; and starting up to see whence it proceeded, he discovered what had happened.

Having hastily ordered the guard of the night to assist in quenching the flames, and removing the furniture, he ran himself into the garden. As soon as he was come up to the house, he was alarmed by the shrieks of a female voice; and the next moment, Almeida appeared at the window of an apartment directly over that which was on fire. Almeida he had till now never seen, nor did he so much as know that Abdallah had a daughter: but though her person was unknown, he was strongly interested in her danger, and called out to her to throw herself into his arms. At the sound of his voice she ran back into the room, such is the force of inviolate modesty, though the smoke was then rising in curling spires from the windows: she was, however, soon driven back, and part of the floor at the same moment giving way, she wrapt her veil round her, and leaped into the garden. Hamet caught her in his arms; but though he broke her fall, he sunk down with her weight: he did not, however, quit his charge; but perceiving she had fainted, he made haste with her into his apartment, to afford her such assistance as he could procure.

She was covered only with the light and loose robe in which she slept, and her veil had dropped off by the way. The moment he entered his closet, the light discovered to him such beauty as before he had never seen: she now began to revive; and before her senses returned, she pressed the prince with an involuntary embrace, which he returned by straining her closer to his breast, in a tumult of delight, confusion, and anxiety, which he could scarce sustain. As he still held her in his arms, and gazed silently upon her, she opened her eyes, and instantly relinquishing her hold, shrieked out, and threw herself from him. As there were no women nearer than that wing of the palace in which his brother resided, and as he had many reasons not to leave her in their charge, he was in the utmost perplexity what to do. He assured her, in some hasty and incoherent words, of her security; he told her, that she was in the royal palace, and that he who had conveyed her thither was Hamet. The habitual

habitual reverence of sovereign power now surmounred all other passions in the bosom of Almeida: she was instantly covered with new confusion; and hiding her face with her hands threw herself at his feet. He raised her with a trepidation almost equal to her own, and endeavoured to sooth her into confidence and tranquillity.

Hitherto her memory had been wholly suspended by violent passions, which had crouded upon her in a rapid and uninterrupted succession, and the first gleam of recollection threw her into a new agony: having been silent a few moments, she suddenly smote her hands together, and bursting into tears, cried out—'Abdallah! my father! my father!' Hamet not only knew but felt all the meaning of the exclamation, and immediately ran again into the garden: he had advanced but a few paces, before he discerned an old man sitting upon the ground, and looking upward in silent anguish, as if he had exhausted the power of complaint. Hamet, upon a nearer approach, perceived by the light of the flame that it was Abdallah; and instantly calling him by his name, told him, that his daughter was safe. At the name of his daughter, Abdallah suddenly started up, as if he had been roused by the voice of an angel from the sleep of death: Hamet again repeated, that his daughter was in safety; and Abdallah looking wistfully at him, knew him to be the king. He was then struck with an awe that restrained him from enquiry: but Hamet directing him where he might find her, went forward, that he might not lessen the pleasure of their interview, nor restrain the first transports of duty and affection by his presence. He soon met with other fugitives from the fire, which had opened a communication between the gardens and the street; and among them some women belonging to Almeida, whom he conducted himself to their mistress. He immediately allotted to her, and to her father, an apartment in his division of the palace; and the fire being now nearly extinguished, he retired to rest.

## CHAP. VI.

**T**HOUGH the night was far advanced, yet the eyes of Hamet were strangers to sleep; his fancy incessantly repeated the events that had just happened; the image of Almeida was ever before him; and his breast throbbed with a disquietude, which, though it prevented rest, he did not wish to lose.

Almorán, in the mean time, was slumbering away the effects of his intemperance; and in the morning, when he was told what had happened, he expressed no passion but curiosity: he went hastily into the garden; but when he had gazed upon the ruins, and enquired how the fire began, and what it had consumed, he thought of it no more.

But Hamet suffered nothing that regarded himself, to exclude others from his attention: he went again to the ruins, not to gratify his curiosity, but to see what might yet be done to alleviate the misery of the sufferers, and secure for their use what had been preserved from the flames. He found that no life had been lost, but that many persons had been hurt; to these he sent the physicians of his own household: and having rewarded those who had assisted them in their distress, not forgetting even the soldiers who had only fulfilled his own orders, he returned, and applied himself to dispatch the public business in the chamber of council, with the same patient and diligent attention as if nothing had happened. He had, indeed, ordered enquiry to be made after Almeida; and when he returned to his apartment, he found Abdallah waiting to express his gratitude for the obligations he had received.

Hamet accepted his acknowledgments with a peculiar pleasure, for they had some connection with Almeida; after whom he again enquired, with an ardour uncommon even to the benevolence of Hamet. When all his questions had been asked and answered, he appeared still unwilling to dismiss Abdallah, though he seemed at a loss how to detain him; he wanted to know, whether his daughter had yet received an offer of marriage, though he was unwilling to discover his desire by a direct enquiry; but he soon found, that no-  
thing



thing could be known, which was not directly asked, from a man whom reverence and humility kept silent before him, except when something was said which amounted to a command to speak. At length, however, he said, not without some hesitation, 'Is there no one, Abdallah, who will thank me for the preservation of thy daughter, with a zeal equal to thy own?'—'Yes,' replied Abdallah, 'that daughter whom thou hast preserved.' This reply, though it was unexpected, was pleasing: for Hamet was not only gratified to hear that Almeida had expressed herself warmly in his behalf, at least as a benefactor; but he judged, that if any man had been interested in her life as a lover, the answer which Abdallah had given him would not so readily have occurred to his mind.

As this reflection kept Hamet a few moments silent, Abdallah withdrew; and Hamet, as he observed some marks of haste and confusion in his countenance, was unwilling longer to continue him in a situation, which he had now reason to think gave him pain. But Abdallah, who had conceived a sudden thought that Hamet's question was an indirect reproach of Almeida, for not having herself solicited admission to his presence; went in haste to her apartment, and ordered her immediately to make ready to attend him to the king.

Almeida, from whose mind the image of Hamet had not been absent a moment since she first saw him, received this order with a mixture of pain and pleasure, of wishes, hopes, and apprehensions, that filled her bosom with emotion, and covered her face with blushes. She had not courage to ask the reason of the command, which she instantly prepared to obey; but the tenderness of Abdallah, who perceived and pitied her distress, anticipated her wish. In a short time, therefore, he returned to the chamber of presence, and having received permission, he entered with Almeida in his hand. Hamet rose in haste to receive her, with a glow of pleasure and impatience in his countenance; and having raised her from the ground, supported her in his arms, waiting to hear her voice; but though she made many attempts, she could not speak. Hamet, who knew not to what he owed this sudden and unexpected interview, which, though he wished, he could contrive no means to obtain; imagined  
that



that Almeida had some request, and therefore urged her tenderly to make it: but as she still remained silent, he looked at Abdallah, as expecting to hear it from him. 'We have no wish,' said Abdallah, 'but to atone for our offence; nor any request, but that my lord would now accept the thanks of Almeida for the life which he has preserved, and impute the delay, not to ingratitude, but inadvertence: let me now take her back, as thy gift; and let the light of thy favour be upon us.'—'Take her, then,' said Hamet; 'for I would give her only to thee.'

These words of Hamet did not escape the notice either of Abdallah or Almeida; but neither of them mentioned their conjectures to the other. Almeida, who was inclined to judge of Hamet's situation by her own, and who recollected many little incidents, known only to herself, which favoured her wishes; indulged the hope, that she should again hear of Hamet, with more confidence than her father; nor were her expectations disappointed. Hamet reflected with pleasure, that he had prepared the way for a more explicit declaration; and as his impatience increased with his passion every hour, he sent for Abdallah the next morning, and told him, that he wished to be more acquainted with his daughter, with a view to make her his wife. 'As neither you nor your daughter are my subjects,' says Hamet, 'I cannot command you; and if you were, upon this occasion I would not. I do not want a slave, but a friend; not merely a woman, but a wife. If I find Almeida such as my fancy has feigned her; if her mind corresponds with her form; and if I have reason to think that she can give her heart to Hamet, and not merely her hand to the king; I shall be happy.' To this declaration, Abdallah replied with expressions of the profoundest submission and gratitude; and Hamet dismissed him, to prepare Almeida to receive him in the afternoon of the same day.

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## CHAP. VII.

AS eight moons only had passed since the death of Solyman, and as the reverence of Hamet for the memory of his father would not suffer him to marry till the year

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should

should be completed; he determined not to mention Almeida to his brother, till the time when he could marry her was near. The fierce and haughty deportment of Almorán had now left Hamet no room to doubt of his character: and though he had no apprehension that he would make any attempts upon Almeida, after she should be his wife; yet he did not know how much might justly be feared from his passion, if he should see her, and become enamoured of her, while she was yet a virgin in the house of her father.

Almeida had not only unfulfilled purity of mind, but principles of refined and exalted virtue; and as the life of Hamet was an example of all that was either great or good, Abdallah felt no anxiety upon leaving them together, except what arose from his fears, that his daughter would not be able to secure the conquest she had made.

As it was impossible for Hamet to have such an acquaintance with Almeida as he desired, till he could enter into conversation with her upon terms of equality; it was his first care to soothe her into confidence and familiarity, and by degrees he succeeded: he soon found, in the free intercourse of mind with mind, which he established instead of the implicit submission which only echoed his own voice, how little of the pleasure that women were formed to give can be enjoyed, when they are considered merely as slaves to a tyrant's will, the passive subjects of transient dalliance and casual enjoyment. The pleasure which he took in the youthful beauty of Almeida, was now endeared, exalted, and refined, by the tender sensibility of her heart, and by the reflection of his own felicity from her eyes: when he admired the gracefulness of her motion, the elegance of her figure, the symmetry of her features, and the bloom of her complexion, he considered them as the decorations only of a mind capable of mixing with his own in the most exquisite delight, of reciprocating all his ideas, and catching new pleasure from his pleasure. Desire was no longer appetite; it was imagination, it was reason; it included remembrance of the past, and anticipation of the future; and its object was not the sex, but Almeida.

As Hamet never withheld any pleasure that it was in his power to impart, he soon acquainted Abdallah, that he waited only for a proper time to place Almeida upon the throne;

throne; but that he had some reasons for keeping a resolution, which he thought himself obliged to communicate to him, concealed from others.

It happened, however, that some of the women who attended upon Almeida, met with some female slaves belonging to the seraglio of Almorán, at the public baths, and related to them all the particulars of Almeida's preservation by Hamet; that he had first conveyed her to his own apartments, and had since been frequently with her in that which he had assigned her in his palace: they were also lavish in the praise of her beauty, and free in their conjectures what might be the issue of her intercourse with Hamet.

Thus the situation of Hamet and Almeida became the subject of conversation in the seraglio of Almorán, who learnt it himself in a short time from one of his women.

He had hitherto professed great affection for Hamet, and Hamet was deceived by his professions; for, notwithstanding the irregularities of his life, he did not think him capable of concealing malice, or of offering injury to another, except when he was urged by impetuous passions to immediate pleasure. As there was, therefore, an appearance of mutual affection between them, Almorán, though the report of Almeida's beauty had fired his imagination, and fixed him in a resolution to see her, did not think proper to attempt it, without asking Hamet's consent, and being introduced by his order; as he made no doubt of there being a connection between them which would make him resent a contrary conduct.

He took an opportunity, therefore, when they were alone in a summer pavilion that was built on a lake behind the palace, to reproach him, with an air of mirth, for having concealed a beauty near his apartments, though he pretended to have no seraglio. Hamet instantly discovered his surprize and emotion by a blush, which the next moment left his countenance paler than the light clouds that pass by night over the moon. Almorán took no notice of his confusion; but, that he might more effectually conceal his sentiments and prevent suspicion, he suddenly adverted to another subject, while Hamet was hesitating what to reply. By this artifice Hamet was deceived; and concluded, that whatever Almorán had heard of Almeida, had passed slightly over his

mind, and was remembered but by chance; he, therefore, quickly recovered that ease and cheerfulness which always distinguished his conversation.

Almorán observing the success of his artifice, soon after, as if by a sudden and casual recollection, again mentioned the lady; and told him, he would congratulate Abdallah upon having resigned her to his bed. As Hamet could not bear to think of Almorán's mentioning Almeida to her father as his mistress, he replied, that he had no such intimacy with Almeida as he supposed; and that he had so high an opinion of her virtue, as to believe, that if he should propose it she would not consent. The imagination of Almorán caught new fire from beauties which he found were yet unenjoyed, and virtue which stamped them with superior value, by rendering them more difficult of access: and as Hamet had renounced a connection with her as a mistress, he wanted only to know whether he intended her for a wife.

This secret he was contriving to discover, when Hamet having reflected, that if he concealed this particular, Almorán might think himself at liberty to make what attempts he should think fit upon Almeida, without being accountable to him, or giving him just cause of offence, put an end to his doubts, by telling him he had such a design; but that it would be some time before he should carry it into execution. This declaration increased Almorán's impatience: still, however, he concealed his interest in the conversation, which he now suffered to drop.

He parted from his brother, without any farther mention of Almeida; but while he was yet near him, turned hastily back; and, as if merely to gratify his curiosity, told him with a smile, that he must indulge him with a sight of his Circassian; and desired he might accompany him in his next visit, or at some more convenient time: with this request Hamet, as he knew not how to refuse it, complied; but it filled his mind with anxiety and trouble.

He went immediately to Almeida, and told her all that had happened; and as she saw that he was not without apprehensions of mischief from his brother's visit, she gently reproached him for doubting the fidelity of her affection, as she supposed no power could be exerted by Almorán to injure him, who in power was his equal. Hamet, in a trans-

port



port of tenderness, assured her, that he doubted neither her constancy nor her love : but, as to interrupt the comfort of her mind, would only double his own distress, he did not tell her whence his apprehensions proceeded ; nor indeed had they any determinate object, but arose in general from the character of his brother, and the probability of his becoming a competitor for what was essential to the happiness of his life.

But if the happiness of Hamet was lessened, the infelicity of Almorán was increased. All the enjoyments that were in his power he neglected, his attention being wholly fixed upon that which was beyond his reach : he was impatient to see the beauty who had taken entire possession of his mind ; and the probability that he would be obliged to resign her to Hamet, tormented him with jealousy, envy, and indignation.

Hamet, however, did not long delay to fulfil his promise to his brother ; but having prepared Almeida to receive him, he conducted him to her apartment. The idea which Almorán had formed in his imagination, was exceeded by the reality, and his passion was proportionably increased ; yet he found means not only to conceal it from Hamet, but from Almeida, by affecting an air of levity and merriment, which is not less incompatible with the pleasures than the pains of love. After they had been regaled with coffee and sherbet, they parted ; and Hamet congratulated himself, that his apprehensions of finding in Almorán a rival for Almeida's love, were not at an end.

But Almorán, whose passions were become more violent by restraint, was in a state of mind little better than distraction : one moment he determined to seize upon the person of Almeida in the night, and secrete her in some place accessible only to himself ; and the next to assassinate his brother, that he might at once destroy a rival both in empire and in love. But these designs were no sooner formed by his wishes, than they were rejected by his fears : he was not ignorant, that in any contest between him and Hamet, the voice of the public would be against him ; especially in a contest, in which it would appear, that Hamet had suffered wrong.

Many other projects, equally rash, violent, and injurious,



were by turns conceived and rejected : and he came at last to no other determination, than still carefully to conceal his passion, till he should think of some expedient to gratify it ; lest Hamet should have a just reason for refusing to let him see the lady again, and remove her to some place which he might never be able to discover.

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## CHAP. VIII.

**I**N the mean time, Omar, to whom Hamet had from time to time disclosed the minutest particulars of his situation and design, kept his eye almost continually upon Almorán ; and observed him with an attention and sagacity, which it was difficult either to elude or deceive. He perceived, that he was more than usual restless and turbulent ; that in the presence of Hamet he frequently changed countenance ; that his behaviour was artificial and inconsistent, frequently shifting from gloomy discontent and furious agitation, to forced laughter and noisy merriment. He had also remarked, that he seemed most discomposed after he had been with Hamet to Almeida, which happened generally once in a week ; that he was become fond of solitude, and was absent several days together from the apartment of his women.

Omar, who from this conduct of Almorán had begun to suspect his principles, determined to introduce such topics of discourse, as might lead him to discover the state of his mind ; and enable him to enforce and confirm the principles he had taught him, by new proofs and illustrations.

Almorán, who, since the death of his father, had nothing to apprehend from the discovery of sentiments which before he had been careful to conceal ; now urged his objections against religion, when Omar gave him opportunity, without reserve. ‘ You tell me,’ says he, ‘ of beings that are immortal, because they are immaterial ; beings which do not consist of parts, and which, therefore, can admit no solution, the only natural cause of corruption and decay : but that which is not material, can have no extension,’

‘ sion, and what has no extension, possesses no space; and  
‘ of such beings, the mind itself, which you pretend to be  
‘ such a being, has no conception.’

‘ If the mind,’ says Omar, ‘ can perceive that there is in  
‘ itself any single property of such a being, it has irrefra-  
‘ gable evidence that it is such a being; though its mode  
‘ of existence, as distinct from matter, cannot now be com-  
‘ prehended.’—‘ And what property of such a being,’ said  
Almorán, ‘ does the mind of man perceive in itself?’—

‘ That of acting,’ said Omar, ‘ without motion. You have  
‘ no idea, that a material substance can act, but in propor-  
‘ tion as it moves: yet to think, is to act; and with the  
‘ idea of thinking, the idea of motion is never connected;  
‘ on the contrary, we always conceive the mind to be fixed,  
‘ in proportion to the degree of ardour and intenseness  
‘ with which the power of thinking is exerted. Now, if  
‘ that which is material cannot act without motion; and if  
‘ man is conscious, that, to think, is to act and not to move,  
‘ it follows, that there is, in man, somewhat that is not mat-  
‘ ter; somewhat that has no extension, and that possesses  
‘ no space; somewhat which, having no contexture or parts  
‘ that can be dissolved or separated, as exempted from all  
‘ the natural causes of decay.’

Omar paused; and Almorán having stood some moments  
without reply, he seized this opportunity to impress him  
with an awful sense of the power and presence of the Su-  
preme and Eternal Being, from whom his own existence  
was derived: ‘ Let us remember,’ said he, ‘ that to every  
‘ act of this immaterial and immortal part, the Father of  
‘ spirits, from whom it proceeds, is present: when I be-  
‘ hold the busy multitudes that croud the metropolis of  
‘ Persia, in the pursuit of business and projects infinitely  
‘ complicated and various; and consider that every idea  
‘ which passes over their minds, every conclusion, and every  
‘ purpose, with all that they remember of the past, and all  
‘ that they imagine of the future, is at once known to the  
‘ Almighty, who without labour or confusion weighs every  
‘ thought of every mind in His balance, and reserves it to  
‘ the day of retribution; my follies cover me with confu-  
‘ sion, and my soul is humbled in the dust.’

Almorán, though he appeared to listen with attention, and offered nothing against the reasoning of Omar, yet secretly despised it as sophistry, which cunning only had rendered specious; and which he was unable to confute, merely because it was subtle, and not because it was true: he had been led, by his passions, first to love, and then to adopt different opinions; and as every man is inclined to judge of others by himself, he doubted, whether the principles which Omar had thus laboured to establish, were believed even by Omar himself.

Thus was the mind of Almorán to the instructions of Omar as a rock slightly covered with earth, is to the waters of heaven: the crags are left bare by the rain that washes them; and the same showers that fertilize the field, can only discover the sterility of the rock.

Omar, however, did not yet disclose his suspicions to Hamet, because he did not yet see that it could answer any purpose. To remove Almeida from her apartment, would be to shew a distrust, for which there would not appear to be any cause; and to refuse Almorán access to her when he desired it, might precipitate such measures as he might meditate, and engage him in some desperate attempt: he, therefore, contented himself with advising Hamet to conceal the time of his marriage till the evening before he intended it should take place, without assigning the reason on which his advice was founded.

To the counsel of Omar, Hamet was implicitly obedient as to the revelations of the Prophet; but, like his instructions, it was neglected by Almorán, who became every moment more wretched. He had a graceful person, and a vigorous mind; he was in the bloom of youth, and had a constitution that promised him length of days; he had powers which princes were emulous to obey, and wealth by which whatever could administer to luxury might be bought; for every passion, and every appetite, it was easy for him to procure a perpetual succession of new objects: yet was Almorán, not only without enjoyment, but without peace; he was by turns pining with discontent, and raving with indignation; his vices had extracted bitter from every sweet; and having exhausted nature for delight in vain, he was repining at the bounds in which he was confined, and regretting

regretting the want of other powers as the cause of his misery.

Thus the year of mourning for Solyman was completed, without any act of violence on the part of Almorán, or of caution on the part of Hamet; but on the evening of the last day, Hamet, having secretly prepared every thing for performing the solemnity in a private manner, acquainted Almorán by a letter, which Omar undertook to deliver, that he should celebrate his marriage on the morrow. Almorán, who never doubted but he should have notice of this event much longer before it was to happen, read the letter with a perturbation that it was impossible to conceal: he was alone in his private apartment; and taking his eye hastily from the paper, he crushed it together in his hand, and thrusting it into his bosom, turned from Omar without speaking; and Omar, thinking himself dismissed, withdrew.

The passions which Almorán could no longer suppress, now burst out in a torrent of exclamations: 'Am I then,' said he, 'blasted for ever with a double curse, divided empire and disappointed love! What is dominion, if it is not possessed alone! and what is power, which the dread of rival power perpetually controuls! is it for me to listen in silence to the wrangling of slaves, that I may at last apportion to them what, with a clamorous insolence, they demand as their due! as well may the sun linger in his course, and the world mourn in darkness for the day; that the glow-worm may still be seen to glimmer upon the earth, and the owls and bats that haunt the sepulchres of the dead enjoy a longer night. Yet this have I done, because this has been done by Hamet: and my heart sickens in vain with the desire of beauty, because my power extends not to Almeida. With dominion undivided and Almeida, I should be Almorán; but without them, I am less than nothing.'

Omar, who, before he had passed the pavilion, heard a sound which he knew to be the voice of Almorán, returned hastily to the chamber in which he left him, believing he had withdrawn too soon, and that the king, as he knew no other was present, was speaking to him: he soon drew near enough to hear what was said; and while he stood doubt-



ing and irresolute, dreading to be discovered, and not knowing how to retire, Almorán turned about.

At first, both stood motionless with confusion and amazement; but Almorán's pride soon surmounted his other passions, and his disdain of Omar gave his guilt the firmness of virtue.

'It is true,' said he, 'that thou hast stolen the secret of my heart; but do not think that I fear it should be known: though my poignard could take it back with thy life, I leave it with thee. To reproach or curse thee, would do thee honour, and lift thee into an importance which otherwise thou canst never reach.' Almorán then turned from him with a contemptuous frown: but Omar caught him by the robe; and prostrating himself upon the ground, intreated to be heard. His importunity at length prevailed; and he attempted to exculpate himself from the charge of having insidiously intruded upon the privacy of his prince; but Almorán sternly interrupted him: 'And what art thou,' said he, 'that I should care, whether thou art innocent or guilty?'—'If not for my sake,' said Omar, 'listen for thy own; and though my duty is despised, let my affection be heard. That thou art not happy, I know; and I now know the cause. Let my lord pardon the presumption of his slave: he that seeks to satisfy all his wishes, must be wretched; he only can be happy, by whom some are suppressed.' At these words Almorán snatched his robe from the hand of Omar, and spurned him in a transport of rage and indignation: 'The suppression of desire,' said he, 'is such happiness, as that of the deaf who do not remember to have heard. If it is virtue, know, that, as virtue, I despise it: for though it may secure the obedience of the slave, it can only degrade the prerogative of a prince. I cast off all restraint, as I do thee: be gone, therefore, to Hamet, and see me no more.'

Omar obeyed without reply: and Almorán being again alone, the conflict in his mind was renewed with greater violence than before. He felt all that he had disguised to Omar, with the keenest sensibility; and anticipated the effects of his detection with unutterable anguish and regret. He walked backward and forward with a hasty but

interrupted



interrupted pace; sometimes stopping short, and pressing his hand hard upon his brow; and sometimes by violent gestures shewing the agitation of his mind; he sometimes stood silent with his eyes fixed upon the ground, and his arms folded together; and sometimes a sudden agony of thought forced him into loud and tumultuous exclamations: he cursed the impotence of mind that had suffered his thoughts to escape from him unawares, without reflecting that he was even then repeating the folly; and while he felt himself the victim of vice, he could not suppress his contempt of virtue: 'If I must perish,' said he, 'I will at least perish unsubdued: I will quench no wish that nature kindles in my bosom; nor shall my lips utter any prayer, but for new powers to feed the flame.'

As he uttered this expression, he felt the palace shake; he heard a rushing like a blast in the desert; and a Being of more than human appearance stood before him. Almorán, though he was terrified, was not humbled; and he stood expecting the event, whether evil or good, rather with obduracy than courage.

'Thou seest,' says the Appearance, 'a Genius, whom the daring purpose of thy mind has convoked from the middle region, where he was appointed to wait the signal; and who is now permitted to act in concert with thy will. Is not this the language of thy heart?—“Whatever pleasure I can snatch from the hand of Time, as he passes by me, I will secure for myself: my passions shall be strong, that my enjoyments may be great; for what is the portion allotted to man, but the joyful madness that prolongs the hours of festivity, the fierce delight that is extorted from injury by revenge, and the sweet succession of varied pleasures, which the wish that is ever changing prepares for love?”'

'Whatever thou art,' said Almorán, 'whose voice has thus disclosed the secret of my soul, accept my homage, for I will worship thee: and be thou henceforth my wisdom and my strength.'

'Arise,' said the Genius, 'for therefore am I sent. To thy own powers mine shall be superadded: and if, as weak only, thou hast been wretched; henceforth thou shalt be happy. Take no thought for to-morrow; to-

‘morrow my power shall be employed in thy behalf. Be not affrighted at any prodigy; but put thy confidence in me.’ While he was yet speaking, and the eyes of Almorán were fixed upon him, a cloud gathered round him; and the next moment, dissolving again into air, he disappeared.

## CH A P. IX.

ALMORAN, when he recovered from his astonishment, and had reflected upon the prodigy, determined to wait the issue, and refer all his hopes to the interposition of the Genius, without attempting any thing to retard the marriage; at which he resolved to be present, that he might improve any supernatural event which might be produced in his favour.

Hamet, in the mean time, was anticipating the morrow with a mixture of anxiety and pleasure; and though he had no reason to think any thing could prevent his marriage, yet he wished it was over, with an impatience that was considerably increased by fear.

Though the anticipation of the great event that was now so near, kept him waking the greatest part of the night, yet he rose early in the morning; and while he waited till Almeida should be ready to see him, he was told that Omar was without, and desired admittance. When he came in, Hamet, who always watched his countenance as a mariner the stars of heaven, perceived that it was obscured with perplexity and grief. ‘Tell me, said Hamet, ‘whence is the sorrow that I discover in thy face?’—‘I am sorrowful,’ said Omar, ‘not for myself, but for thee.’ At these words Hamet stepped backward, and fixed his eyes upon Omar, without power to speak. ‘Consider,’ said Omar, ‘that thou art not a man only, but a prince: consider also, that immortality is before thee; and that thy felicity, during the endless ages of immortality, depends upon thyself: fear not, therefore, what thou canst suffer from others; the evil and the good of life are transient as the morning

‘ morning dew, and over these only the hand of others can prevail.’

Hamet, whose attachment to life was strong, and whose expectations of immediate enjoyment were high, did not feel the force of what Omar had said, though he assented to its truth. ‘ Tell me,’ said he, ‘ at once, what thou fearest for me; deliver me from the torments of uncertainty, and trust my own fortitude to save me from despair.’— ‘ Know then,’ said Omar, ‘ that thou art hated by Almorán, and that he loves Almeida.’ At this declaration, the astonishment of Hamet was equal to his concern; and he was in doubt whether to believe or disbelieve what he heard: but the moment he recollected the wisdom and integrity of Omar, his doubts were at an end; and having recovered from his surprize, he was about to make such enquiries as might gratify the anxious and tumultuous curiosity which was excited in his breast; when Omar, lifting up his hand, and beginning again to speak, Hamet remained silent.

‘ When my cheeks,’ said Omar, ‘ were yet ruddy with youth, and my limbs were braced by vigour, mine eye was guided to knowledge by the lamp that is kindled at midnight; and much of what is hidden in the innermost recesses of nature, was discovered to me: my prayer ascended in secret to Him, with whom there is wisdom from everlasting to everlasting, and He illumined my darkness with his light. I know, by such sensations as the world either feels not at all, or feels unnoticed without knowledge of their use, when the powers that are invisible are permitted to mingle in the walks of men; and well I know, that some being who is more than mortal, has joined with Almorán against thee, since the veil of night was last spread upon the earth.’

Hamet, whose blood was chilled with horror, and whose nerves were no longer obedient to his will, after several ineffectual attempts to speak, looked up at Omar; and striking his hand upon his breast, cried out, in an earnest, but faltering voice—‘ What shall I do?’—‘ Thou must do,’ said Omar, ‘ that which is RIGHT. Let not thy foot be drawn by an allurement, or driven by any terror, from the path of virtue. While thou art there, thou art in safety:

‘ safety : and though the world should unite against thee, by the united world thou canst not be hurt.’

‘ But what friendly Power,’ said Hamet, ‘ shall guard even the path of virtue from grief and pain ; from the silent shaft of disappointed love, or the sounding scourge of outrageous jealousy ? These, surely, have overtaken the foot of perseverance, and by these, though I should persevere, may my feet be overtaken.’—‘ What thou sayest,’ replied Omar, ‘ is true ; and it is true also, that the tempest which roots up the forest, is driven over the mountain with unabated rage : but from the mountain, what can it take more than the vegetable dust, which the hand of Nature has scattered upon the moss that covers it ? As the dust is to the mountain, so is all that the storms of life can take from virtue, to the sum of good which the Omnipotent has appointed for its reward.’ Hamet, whose eye now expressed a kind of doubtful confidence, a hope that was repressed by fear, remained still silent ; and Omar, perceiving the state of his mind, proceeded to fortify it by new precepts. ‘ If heaven,’ said he, ‘ should vanish like a vapour, and this firm orb of earth should crumble into dust, the virtuous mind would stand secure amidst the ruins of nature : for He, who has appointed the heavens and the earth to fail, has said to Virtue—“ Fear not ; for thou canst neither perish, nor be wretched.” Call up thy strength, therefore, to the fight, in which thou art sure of conquest : do thou only that which is RIGHT, and leave the event to Heaven.’

Hamet, in this conference with Omar, having gradually recovered his fortitude ; and the time being now near, when he was to conduct Almeida to the court of the palace, where the marriage ceremony was to be performed ; they parted with mutual benedictions, each recommending the other to the protection of the Most High.

At the appointed hour, the princes of the court being assembled, the Mufti and the Imans being ready, and Almorán seated upon his throne ; Hamet and Almeida came forward, and were placed one on the right-hand, and the other on the left. The Mufti was then advancing, to hear and to record the mutual promise which was to unite them ; Almorán was execrating the appearance of the Genius, as a delusive



delusive dream, in all the tumults of anguish and despair; and Hamet began to hope, that the suspicions of Omar had been ill-founded; when a stroke of thunder shook the palace to its foundations, and a cloud rose from the ground, like a thick smoke, between Hamet and Almeida.

Almorán, who was inspired with new confidence and hope, by that which had struck the rest of the assembly with terror, started from his seat with an ardent and furious look; and at the same moment, a voice, that issued from the cloud, pronounced with a loud but hollow tone—

‘ Fate has decreed, to Almorán, Almeida.’

At these words Almorán rushed forward, and placing himself by the side of Almeida, the cloud disappeared; and he cried out—‘ Let me now proclaim to the world the secret, which to this moment I have hidden in my bosom: I love Almeida. The Being, who alone knew my love, has now by miracle approved it. Let his decree be accomplished.’ He then commanded that the ceremony should proceed; and seizing the hand of the lady, began to repeat that part of it which was to have been repeated by Hamet. But Almeida instantly drew her hand from him in an agony of distress; and Hamet, who till then had stood motionless with amazement and horror, started from his trance, and springing forward, rushed between them. Almorán turned fiercely upon him; but Hamet, who having been warned by Omar, imputed the prodigy to some evil Being whom it was virtue to resist, laid his hand upon his scymitar, and, with a frown of indignation and defiance, commanded him to stand off: ‘ I now know thee,’ said he, ‘ as a man; and, therefore, as a brother, I know thee not.’

Almorán reflecting, that the foundation of this reproach was unknown to all who were present, and that to them he would therefore appear to be injured; looked round with an affected smile of wonder and compassion, as appealing to them from a charge that was thus fiercely and injuriously brought against him, and imputing it to the violence of sudden passions by which truth and reason were overborne. The eye of Hamet at once detected the artifice, which he disdained to expose; he therefore commanded the guard that attended, to carry off Almeida to her apartment. The guard



guard was preparing to obey, when Almorán, who thought he had now such an opportunity to get her into his own power, as would never return, ordered them to see her safely lodged in his own seraglio.

The men, who thus received opposite commands from persons to whom they owed equal obedience, stood still, not knowing which to prefer: Almorán then reproached them with want of obedience, not to him, but to God, appealing to the prodigy for the justification of his claim. Hamet, on the contrary, repeated his order, with a look and emphasis scarce less commanding than the thunder and the voice. But the priests interposing in favour of Almorán, upon presumption that his right had been decided by a superior power; the guard rushed between Hamet and Almeida, and with looks that expressed the utmost reluctance and regret, attempted to separate their hands, which were clasped in each other. She was affrighted at the violence, but yet more at the apprehension of what was to follow; she, therefore, turned her eyes upon Hamet, conjuring him not to leave her, in a tone of tenderness and distress which it is impossible to describe: he replied with a vehemence that was worthy of his passion—‘I will not leave thee!’ and immediately drew his sabre. At the moment they forced her from him; and a party having interposed to cover those that were carrying her off, Hamet lifted up his weapon to force his passage through them; but was prevented by Omar, who, having pressed through the crowd, presented himself before him. ‘Stop me not,’ said Hamet; ‘it is for Almeida!’—‘If thou wouldst save Almeida,’ said Omar, ‘and thyself, do that only which is RIGHT. What have these done who oppose thee, more than they ought? and what end can their destruction answer, but to stain thy hands with unavailing murder? Thou canst only take the life of a few faithful slaves, who will not lift up their hands against thee; thou canst not rescue Almeida from thy brother; but thou canst preserve thyself from guilt.’

These words of Omar suspended the rage of Hamet, like a charm; and returning his scymitar in its sheath—‘Let me then,’ said he, ‘suffer, and be guiltless. It is true, that against these ranks my single arm must be ineffectual; but if my wrongs can rouse a nation to repress the

‘tyranny,

'tyranny, that will shortly extend over it the injuries that now reach only to me; justice shall be done to Hamet.' Then turning to Almorán—'Henceforth,' said he, 'the kingdom shall be mine or thine. To govern in concert with thee, is to associate with the powers of hell. The Beings that are superior to evil are the friends of Hamet; and if these are thy enemies, what shall be thy defence?' Almorán replied only by a contemptuous smile; and the assembly being dismissed, he retired to his apartment: but Hamet and Omar went out to the people, who had gathered in an incredible multitude about the palace.

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## CHAP. X.

**A**Rumour of what had happened within had reached them; which some believed and some doubted: but when they saw Omar and Hamet return together, and observed that their looks were full of resentment and trouble, they became silent with attention in a moment; which Omar observing, addressed them with an eloquence of which they had often acknowledged the force, and of which they never repented the effect.

He told them the tender connection between Hamet and Almeida, and disclosed the subtle hypocrisy of Almorán: he expatiated upon the folly of supposing, that the Power that was supreme in goodness and truth, should command a violation of vows that had been mutually interchanged, and often repeated; and devote to Almorán the beauties, which could only be voluntarily surrendered to Hamet. They heard him with a vacant countenance of surprise and wonder; and while he waited for their reply, they agreed among themselves that no man could avoid the destiny that was written upon his head; and that if Almeida had thus been taken from Hamet, and given to Almorán, it was an event that by an unchangeable decree was appointed to happen; and that, therefore, it was their duty to acquiesce. Omar then beckoned with his hand for audience a second time; and told them, that Almorán had not only praised the

the arts of forcery to deprive Hamet of Almeida, but that he meditated a design to usurp the sole dominion, and deprive him of the share of the government to which he had a right by the will of Solyman his father. This also they heard with the same sentiments of wonder and acquiescence—‘ If it is decreed,’ said they, ‘ that Almorán should be king alone, who can prevent it? and if it is not, who can bring it to pass?’—‘ But know ye not,’ said Omar, ‘ that when the end is appointed, the means are appointed also? If it is decreed that one of you shall this night die by poison, is it not decreed also that he shall drink it?’

The crowd now gazed upon each other, without reply, for some minutes: and at last they only said, that no effort of theirs should change the universal appointment of all things; that if Almorán was to be king alone, he would be so notwithstanding all opposition; and that if he was not to be king alone; no attempt of his own, however supported, could make him so. ‘ I will not,’ said Omar, ‘ contradict your opinion; I will only tell you what I have heard, and leave you to suffer the calamities which threaten you, with a fortitude and resignation that are suitable to your principles; having no consolation to offer you, but that Hamet, whose destiny it was not to make you happy, will suffer with you the evils that neither he nor you could prevent: the mournful comfort of this fellowship he will not be denied; for he loves you too well, to wish even to be happy alone.’ The crowd fixed their eyes upon Hamet, for whom their affection was now strongly moved, with looks of much greater intelligence and sensibility; a confused murmur, like the fall of the pebbles upon the beach when the surge retires from the shore, expressed their gratitude to Hamet, and their apprehensions for themselves.

Omar waited till they were again silent, and then improved the advantage he had gained. ‘ Almorán,’ said he, ‘ considers you as the slaves of his power; Hamet as the objects of his benovelence: your lives and your properties, in the opinion of Almorán, are below his notice; but Hamet considers his own interest as connected with yours. When Almorán, therefore, shall be unchecked by  
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the influence of Hamet, he will leave you to the mercy of some delegated tyrant, whose whole power will be exerted to oppress you, that he may enrich himself.'

A new fire was now kindled in their eyes, and their cheeks glowed with indignation at the wrongs that threatened them; they were no longer disposed to act upon the principles of fatality, as they had perversely understood them; and they argued at once like reasonable and free beings, whose actions were in their choice, and who had no doubt but that their actions would produce adequate effects. They recollected that Omar had, in the reign of Solyman, often rescued them from such oppression as now threatened them; and that the power of Hamet had since interposed in their behalf, when Almorán would have stretched his prerogative to their hurt, or have left them a prey to the farmer of a tax. 'Shall Hamet,' said they, 'be deprived of the power that he employs only for our benefit? and shall it centre in Almorán, who will abuse it to our ruin? Shall we rather support Almorán in the wrong he has done to Hamet, than Hamet to obtain justice of Almorán? Hamet is our king: let him command us, and we will obey.' This was uttered with a shout that echoed from the mountains beyond the city, and continued near a full hour. In the mean time, the multitude was encreasing every moment; and the troops that lay in and near the city having taken arms, fell in with the stream; they were secretly attached to Hamet, under whose eye they had been formed, and of whose bounty they had often partaken: and their fear being removed by the general cry, which left them no room to apprehend an opposition in favour of Almorán, they were now at full liberty to follow their inclinations.

In the mean time, Almorán, who had retired to the innermost court of the palace, had heard the tumult, and was alarmed for his safety: he ran from room to room, confused and terrified, without attempting or directing any thing either for his defence or escape; yet he sent every moment to know the state of the insurrection, and to what end its force would be directed.

Among those whom accident rather than choice had attached to the interest of Almorán, were Osmyn and Caled: they



they were both distinguished by his favour; and each had conceived hopes that if he should possess the throne alone, he would delegate his authority to him. Almorán now ordered them to take the command of the troops that were appointed to attend his person as their peculiar duty, with as many others as had not declared for Hamet, and to secure all the avenues that led to his seraglio.

Omar and Hamet were now on horseback, and had begun to form the troops that had joined them, and as many others as were armed, which were before mingled together in a confused multitude. An account of this was brought to Almorán by Osmyn; and threw him into a perturbation and perplexity, that disgraced his character, and confounded his attendants. He urged Osmyn, in whom he most confided, to dispatch, without giving him any orders to execute; then turning from him, he uttered in a low and inarticulate voice, the most passionate exclamations of distress and terror, being struck with the thought that his guard might betray him: when he recollected himself, and perceived that Osmyn was still present, he burst into a rage, and snatching out his poignard, he swore by the soul of the Prophet, that if he did not instantly attempt something, he would stab him to the heart. Osmyn drew back trembling and confused; but having yet received no orders, he would have spoken, but Almorán drove him from his presence with menaces and execrations.

The moment that Osmyn left him, his rage subsided in his fears, and his fears were mingled with remorse. 'Which way soever I turn,' said he, 'I see myself surrounded by destruction. I have incensed Osmyn by unreasonable displeasure, and causeless menaces. He must regard me at once with abhorrence and contempt; and it is impossible but he should revolt to Hamet.'

In this agony the terrors of futurity rushed upon his mind with all their force, and he started as if at the bite of a scorpion: 'To me,' said he, 'death, that now approaches, will be but the beginning of sorrow. I shall be cut off at once from enjoyment, and from hope; and the dreadful moment is now at hand.' While he was speaking the palace again shook, and he stood again in the presence of the Genius.

'Almorán,



‘Almorán,’ said the inhabitant of the unapparent world, ‘the evil which thou fearest shall not be upon thee. Make haste, and shew thyself from the gallery to the people, and the tumult of faction shall be still before thee: tell them, that their rebellion is not against thee only, but against him by whom thou reignest; appeal boldly to that power for a confirmation of thy words, and rely for the attesting sign upon me.’ Almorán, who had stooped with his face to the ground, now looked upward, and found himself alone: he hastened, therefore, to follow the directions he had received; and hope was again kindled in his bosom.

Osmyñ, in the mean time, made a proper disposition of the troops now under his command; and had directed a select company to remain near the person of the king, that they might at least make good his retreat. While he was waiting at his post, and revolving in his mind the total disappointment of his hopes, and considering what he should do if Hamet should establish himself alone, he was joined by Caled.

Caled had a secret enmity against Osmyñ, as his rival in the favour of Almorán: but as he had concealed his own pretensions from Osmyñ, Osmyñ had no ill-will against Caled. As they were now likely to be involved in one common calamity, by the ruin of the prince whose party they had espoused, Caled’s enmity subsided, and the indifference of Osmyñ was warmed into kindness; mutual distress produced mutual confidence; and Caled, after condoling with Osmyñ on their present hopeless situation, proposed that they should draw off their forces, and revolt to Hamet. This proposition Osmyñ rejected, not only from principle, but from interest: ‘Now we have accepted of a trust,’ said he, ‘we ought not to betray it. If we had gone over to Hamet, when he first declared against his brother, he would have received us with joy, and probably have rewarded our service; but I know that his virtue will abhor us for treachery, though practised in his favour: treachery, under the dominion of Hamet, will not only cover us with dishonour, but will probably devote us to death.’

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In this reasoning Caled could not but acquiesce; he felt himself secretly but forcibly reprov'd, by the superior virtue of Osmyn: and while he regretted his having made a proposal, which had been rejected not only as imprudent but infamous, he concluded that Osmyn would ever after suspect and despise him; and he, therefore, from a new cause, conceived new enmity against him. They parted, however, without any appearance of suspicion or disgust; and, in a short time, they were in circumstances very different from their expectations.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.